



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet**  
**Admiral Scott H. Swift**  
*USS John Finn (DDG 113) commissioning ceremony*  
*Pearl Harbor, Hawaii*  
*July 15, 2017*  
*As prepared for delivery*

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, honored guests, fellow flag and general officers, and especially, family and friends of Lieutenant John Finn.

It is an honor and pleasure to join you here this morning to welcome the U.S. Navy's newest guided-missile destroyer to the Pacific Fleet.

My role is to introduce my boss, which is an easy task because he is a man who truly needs no introduction. So given that fact, I am going to take the liberty to quickly highlight why this commissioning is so important to me as the Pacific Fleet commander.

From a professional perspective, today's commissioning resonates with me as USS John Finn enters service here in the Indo-Asia-Pacific, and we once again face challenges to the peace and security that the rules-based international system has provided for 70 years. The impressive capabilities John Finn brings to the fleet gives those who would challenge us reason to pause, and reinforces America's unwavering commitment to our allies, partners and friends in the region.

This ship bears a proud name, and I have no doubt that the Sailors who sail her over the horizon will embody John Finn's example of initiative, bravery, and toughness as they chart her future in defense of our great nation.

When war came to windward Oahu 75 years ago, John Finn did not hesitate to take station, return fire, and lead his sailors in the fight, despite his own extensive wounds. His courage that morning inspires present and future Sailors, and embodies a heritage of excellence that we are both obligated and privileged to continue and build upon through our own service.

From a personal perspective, today's commissioning resonates with me as my first commanding officer assignment was in the early 1990's as a young Lt. Cmdr. when I was assigned as the CO of the Strike Fighter Weapons School Pacific in Lemoore, California. At times the fact that John Finn was a Medal of Honor recipient overshadows the fact that he was an ordnanceman. To the ordnancemen past and present, he is thought of first as one of them and they are part of him.

At the Weapons School in Lemoore, John Finn and his story were central to our mission of training and certifying both ordnancemen and Aviators to employ the F/A-18 as a weapons system.

We had a plaque dedication in John's honor that still stands today at the entrance of the school, embedded in a stone from the Sierras. We were honored to have John attend its dedication. He was personable, effusive in his praise for today's Sailors, especially ordnancemen, and humble in all things attributed to him, saying often, I did no more than what any of you could and would do in the same circumstances.

It is a fitting testament to the enduring impact of America's World War II heroes that more than seven decades after the attack on Pearl Harbor, we are gathered to honor him as a starring member of the Greatest Generation. Their legacy of service and sacrifice for America's security persists today, as their children now lead the vanguard defending our national values, which brings me to our speaker today.

Earlier I spoke of Admiral Harris as a man who needs no introduction, certainly to his audience. But there are few details you might not know about him.

He is the son of a Navy chief petty officer who steamed aboard USS Lexington during the Battle of Coral Sea, survived her sinking, eventually being rescued from the sea, just a few short months after John Finn's brave actions at Kaneohe.

Admiral Harris' father continued to serve with honor throughout the remainder of the war eventually coming to serve in Japan during the post war years. There he met and married his wife, a Japanese national. I am sure, neither imagined in their wildest dreams that their young son, from such unique origins, would come to command the Pacific Command.

Though Admiral Harris was inspired to join the military by the stories of his father's experiences, along with those of several of his uncles who also had enlisted, it was his mother's example of grace, humility, and sacrifice that taught him the true meaning of service.

During his career as a naval flight officer, Admiral Harris has logged 4,400 flight hours, including more than 400 combat hours, has held several commands, and has served in every geographic combatant command region. Today he leads our military throughout the Indo-Asia-Pacific to provide the security and stability that all nations of the region have enjoyed since the end of World War II and that his father, along with so many others, fought so hard for.

His experience truly spans generations, from his father's service throughout World War II, to his responsibilities providing for the security, and from that security the stability of over half the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, the commander of U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Harry Harris.